

TENNESSEE STATE NATURAL AREAS WEEK

April 3 – 9, 2006

While the Tennessee Natural Areas Week is officially April 3 – 9, there are numerous activities included on April 1 and April 2. This is for the purpose of providing extensive programming on two weekends, so events are more accessible to the public. Additionally, events are offered throughout the year at many state natural areas. Information about these events can be found on the natural areas website at:

www.tdec.net/nh/natareas “natural areas calendar of events.”

WEST TENNESSEE ACTIVITIES

Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park and Natural Area – Raptor Educational Program

Location: Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park, Nature Center

Date: Saturday, Wednesday, and Thursday April 1st 5th, and 6th

Time: 2:00 pm CST (April 1st) and 2:00 pm CDT (April 5th and 6th)

Leader: Sam Morouney, Park Interpretive Specialist

Sponsor: Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park

No reservations required

Description: We have some amazing birds of prey that live around us and we don't usually realize it. We offer an opportunity to see some of these noble creatures right up close and learn about how they live, what they eat and how they hunt, and how their special adaptations make them so fascinating and unique. There is no fee or reservations needed. Meet at the Nature Center on Poplar Tree Lake at the listed dates and times:

Sunk Lake State Natural Area – Bottomland Swamp Canoe Trip

Location: Sunk Lake State Natural Area, boat ramp

Date: Saturday April 1st

Time: 10:00 am CST

Leader: Chad Harden, Stewardship Ecologist, Natural Areas Program

Sponsor: Division of Natural Heritage

Reservations required: Contact Chad Harden at (731) 512-1369 or at Charles.Harden@state.tn.us

Description: Explore the other lakes created by the New Madrid earthquakes of 1811 and 1812. Paddle from lake to lake in this flooded forest along the Mississippi River. Participants must provide their own canoes. Don't forget your life jackets and lunch. Meet at the boat ramp off Sunk Lake Road.

Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park and Natural Area – Wildflower hike

Location: Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park, Visitor Center

Date: Saturday April 1st and Wednesday April 5th

Time: 10:00 am CST (April 1st) and 10:00 am CDT (April 5th)

Leader: Sam Morouney, Park Interpretive Specialist

Sponsor: Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park

No reservations required

Description: These are invigorating 1.5 mile guided hikes on our beautiful Woodland Trail following an aesthetic, meandering creek. We will look at and identify all the new spring wildflowers as well as other interesting plants and their uses as food or medicine. Wear shoes and clothing appropriate to hiking; bring water and bug spray. There is no fee and no reservations are needed. Each trip meets at the Visitor Center.

Reelfoot Lake State Park and Natural Area – Deep Swamp Canoe Trips

Location: Reelfoot Lake State Park

Date: April 1st and 2nd

Time: 8:00 am and 1:00 pm CST (April 1st) and 8:00 am and 1:00 pm CDT (April 2nd)

Leader: David Haggard, Tennessee State Parks

Sponsor: Reelfoot Lake State Park

Reservations required: Contact the park office at ph (731) 253-9652

Description: Reelfoot Lake State Park will again be offering the Deep Swamp Canoe Trips. Join experienced naturalist on a unique trip into seldom-visited areas of Reelfoot Lake. The trip is into old growth cypress forest and will visit an eagle nest. Reservations required.

Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park and Natural Area – Deep Swamp Canoe Trips

Location: Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park

Date: Sunday April 2nd

Time: 9:00am and 1:00 pm CDT

Leader: Sam Morouny, Park Interpretive Specialist

Sponsor: Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park

Reservations required: Contact the park office at ph (901) 876-5215

Description: This is an exciting guided tour through Shelby Forest's mature bald cypress swamps, where you can see a heron and egret rookery, find large primitive fish splashing beside your canoe, paddle between the huge old cypress trees, and possibly see an American bald eagle. This is a bird-lover's paradise! There are only 11 spots available per trip, unless you bring your own canoe or kayak; in either case you must call for reservations. There is no fee for this trip, but donations are greatly appreciated to help support our program services and wildlife rehabilitation program. Bring clothing and shoes that can get wet and muddy and are appropriate for the weather. Bring water, bug spray, and sun block according to your needs. This trip lasts about 2 hours. Be prepared to caravan in your personal vehicle to the launch site (a short distance from the Visitor Center). Each trip meets at the Visitor Center.

Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park and Natural Area – Deep Swamp Canoe Trip

Location: Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park

Date: Thursday April 6th

Time: 9:00 am CDT

Leader: Sam Morouny, Park Interpretive Specialist

Sponsor: Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park

Reservations required: Contact the park office at ph (901) 876-5215

Description: This is an exciting guided tour through Shelby Forest's mature bald cypress swamps, where you can see a heron and egret rookery, find large primitive fish splashing beside your canoe, paddle between the huge old cypress trees, and possibly see an American bald eagle. This is a bird-lover's paradise! There are only 11 spots available per trip, unless you bring your own canoe or kayak; in either case you must call for reservations. There is no fee for this trip, but donations are greatly appreciated to help support our program services and wildlife rehabilitation program. Bring clothing and shoes that can get wet and muddy and are appropriate for the weather. Bring water, bug spray, and sunblock according

to your needs. This trip lasts about 2 hours. Be prepared to caravan in your personal vehicle to the launch site (a short distance from the Visitor Center). Each trip meets at the Visitor Center.

Ghost River State Natural Area –Canoe Float

Location: Ghost River State Natural Area, meet at Yager Road bridge just south of LaGrange

Date: Friday April 7th

Time: 9:00 am CDT

Leader: Chad Harden, Stewardship Ecologist, Natural Areas Program, and Keith Kirkland, Wolf River Conservancy

Sponsors: Division of Natural Heritage and the Wolf River Conservancy

Reservations required: Contact Chad Harden at (731) 512-1369 or at Charles.Harden@state.tn.us

Description: Canoe the Ghost River section of the Wolf River from the Yager Road bridge at LaGrange to the Bateman Road bridge near Moscow. Follow a natural winding braided channel through bottomland forest, a cypress/tupelo swamp, a flooded forest, and a sandy shifting channel with emergent marsh vegetation. Find out why it is called the “Ghost” section and why several canoeists got lost before the trail was marked for public use. Bring your own canoe, clothes that can get wet, and your lunch.

Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park and Natural Area – Pontoon Boat Cruises

Location: Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park

Date: Saturday, Wednesday and Thursday April 1st, 5th, 6th

Time: 1:00 pm CST (April 1st) and 1:00 pm CDT (April 5th and 6th)

Leader: Sam Morouney, Park Interpretive Specialist

Sponsor: Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park

Reservations required: Contact the park office at ph (901) 876-5215

Description: These are guided 45-minute trips around our scenic 135-acre Poplar Tree Lake. We’ll talk about the native wildlife, lake ecology, forest and swamp ecosystems, local flora, and much more! There is a \$1 per person fee (age 5 and under free) and reservations are required; limit of 15 per trip. Make reservations at the Visitor Center. The trips meet at the Nature Center.

Carroll Cabin Barrens State Natural Area –Hike

Location: Carroll Cabin Barrens State Natural Area, Bath Springs

Date: Saturday April 8th

Time: 2:00 pm CDT

Leader: Chad Harden, Stewardship Ecologist, Natural Areas Program

Sponsor: Division of Natural Heritage

Reservations required: Contact Chad Harden at (731) 512-1369 or at Charles.Harden@state.tn.us

Description: Hike the recently completed loop trail along the wooded ridges, limestone barrens and cedar glades on the west bank of the Tennessee River. Learn about the reason for the State’s interest in preserving the property and what makes it a significant natural area worthy of protection. The trail is a moderately strenuous two-mile loop covering 200+ feet in elevation change and providing an excellent hilltop view across the Tennessee River. Wear sturdy shoes, bring water and a snack, and dress appropriately for the weather.

Reelfoot Lake State Park and Natural Area – Deep Swamp Canoe Trips

Location: Reelfoot Lake State Park

Date: Saturday April 8th and Sunday April 9th

Time: 8:00am and 1:00 pm CDT

Leader: David Haggard, Tennessee State Parks

Sponsor: Reelfoot Lake State Park

Reservations required: Contact the park office at ph (731) 253-9652

Description: Reelfoot Lake State Park will again be offering the Deep Swamp Canoe Trips. Join experienced naturalist on a unique trip into seldom-visited areas of Reelfoot Lake. The trip is into old growth cypress forest and will visit an eagle nest. Reservations required.

MIDDLE TENNESSEE ACTIVITIES

Walls of Jericho State Natural Area: Walk to the Walls

Location: Meet at the Target store parking lot off of Bell Road near Hickory Hollow, transportation for a limited number will be provided by reservation.

Date: Saturday, April 1st

Time: 8:00 a.m. CDT

Leader: Forrest Evans Stewardship Ecologist, Natural Areas Program

Sponsor: Division of Natural Heritage

Reservations for van space required: call the Natural Areas office at (615) 532-0431 or email forrest.evans@state.tn.us to reserve a place on the hike.

Description: For a hike that is different from all others, come out to the newest state natural area, The Walls of Jericho. Walk down the Walls of Jericho trail to view the interesting ecology and geology of the area. The Walls are an amazing narrow canyon with vertical rock walls. Along with your canteen, this hike will require a lunch and good hiking shoes. It is rated strenuous due to the climb back out of the canyon at the end of the hike.

Hike at the Duck River Complex Natural Area in Maury County

Location: Meet at the river fountain at the Bicentennial Mall downtown Nashville. Transportation for a limited number will be provided by reservation or you can caravan or carpool the 50 miles to the site.

Date: Sunday April 2

Time: 1:00 pm CDT to approximately 5:00 pm CDT

Leader: Forrest Evans, Stewardship Ecologist, Natural Areas Program

Sponsor: Division of Natural Heritage

Reservations for van space required: Please call (615) 532-0431 or email forrest.evans@state.tn.us

Description: This is an easy two-mile hike to spectacular bluffs overlooking the Duck River in Maury County. This trail was built last summer with help from The Tennessee Trails Association. We will be observing the spring wildflowers, wildlife and the surrounding caves, bluffs, glades, and open areas along the river. Call for details!

Big Swan Headwaters Preserve: Hike the preserve

Location: Meet at 1:00pm at the Shell Station in Summertown, corner of Hwy 43 and 20.

Date: Sunday, April 2

Time: 1:00 pm CDT

Leaders: Cynthia Rohrbach

Sponsor: Swan Conservation Trust

Reservations required: Call Cynthia Rohrbach at (931) 490-3929 to register.

Description: Explore the forests of Big Swan Headwaters Preserve, established in 2004 by Swan Conservation Trust, and enjoy early spring wildflowers, limestone seeps, and pristine streams. Bring a lunch and be prepared for creek crossings.

Couchville Cedar Glade Natural Area: Cedar Glade Hike

Location: Long Hunter State Park Visitor Center

Date: Sunday, April 2

Time: 2:00 pm CDT

Leaders: April Welch, Park Ranger,

Sponsor: Long Hunter State Park

No reservations required: For information, please call (615) 885-2422

Description: The cedar glades of Middle Tennessee offer unique assemblages of plants that occur only in these globally rare ecosystems. Couchville is an exceptional natural area with glades, barrens, and cedar hardwood forest. Early annual glade wildflowers should be in bloom.

Devil's Backbone State Natural Area Guided Hike

Location: Meet at the parking lot on the west side of the Natchez Trace Parkway, three miles north of Highway 412.

Date: Tuesday April 4th

Time: 4:00 pm CDT

Leader: Chad Harden, Stewardship Ecologist, Natural Areas Program, and Rachel Bridges, Davy Crockett State Park

Sponsors: Division of Natural Heritage and Davy Crockett State Park

Reservations required: Please call (731) 512-1369 to make reservations or email Charles.Harden@state.tn.us

Description: Enjoy a moderate, three-mile morning hike across ridges and valleys near the historic Natchez Trace Parkway. The hike will follow a trail through a mature Middle Tennessee oak-hickory forest. See firsthand why the steep ridges and rocky ground were characterized as "rough as the devil's backbone."

Bone Cave State Natural Area Cave Tour: Cave trip through Bone Cave

Location: Rock Island State Park - Van Buren County- Bone Cave SNA. When you make your reservation, you will be provided information when and where to meet. We will drive from Nashville in a van.

Date: Tuesday, April 4th

Time: 11:00 am CDT

Leader: Ranger Danny McCullough, Rock Island State Park

Sponsors: Rock Island State Park and the Division of Natural Heritage

Reservations required: Please call (615) 532-0431 or email Brian.Bowen@state.tn.us
Reservations are limited and transportation from Nashville will be provided.

Description: This will be a moderate two-three hour cave tour through Bone Cave. Bone Cave was a valuable source of salt-peter during the War of 1812 and the Civil War. Participants will get to see much of the equipment used for mining as it remains well preserved. This is a great cave tour for those who have little or no caving experience, or those who are interested in Civil War history. Bone Cave is also well known in paleontological circles as the location where the only intact skeleton of a Pleistocene ground sloth has been found. The bones are on display in the National Academy of Sciences in Philadelphia.

Bone Cave State Natural Area is 300 acres situated in beautiful and rural Van Buren County. Bring a lunch, participants will picnic outside the cave before exploring it. Participants should bring the following: A good flashlight with fresh batteries, a second source of light, such as a mini-mag, long pants (jeans are fine), long sleeve shirt (the cave will be about 53 degrees inside), a light jacket, helmet (optional, but nice to have), sturdy shoes, water and a picnic lunch.

For specific questions about the cave trip, contact Danny McCullough at (931) 686-2471 or Danny.McCullough@state.tn.us

Short Springs and May Prairie State Natural Area Hike

Location: Meet at the Target store parking lot off I-24 on Bell Road. A van will provide transportation for a limited number of participants.

Date: Friday, April 7

Time: 8:30 am CDT - return 5:00 pm CDT

Leader: Brian Bowen, Administrator, Natural Areas Program

Sponsor: Division of Natural Heritage

Reservations required: call (615) 532-0436 or email Brian.Bowen@state.tn.us

Description: This will combine two very different experiences; a hike in one of Tennessee's most beautiful spring wildflower locations and a visit to one of Tennessee's most unique tall grass prairies. You will see two very different ecosystems that are only fifteen miles away. Hiking is easy to moderately difficult. Participants should bring water, lunch, sturdy footwear, and dress appropriately for the weather.

Montgomery Bell State Natural Area and Park Guided Nature Hike

Location: Montgomery Bell State Park is located seven miles east of Dickson in Dickson County on Highway 70. (See www.tdec.net/nh/natareas/montbell/ for more information). We will meet at the park's visitor center.

Date: Friday, 7 April

Time: 9:00 am CDT

Leaders: Kevin Fitch, Science Director – Natural Areas Program and Linn Ann Welch, Biologist – Tennessee State Parks

Sponsors: Division of Natural Heritage and Tennessee State Parks

Reservations required: RSVP by April 6th to Kevin Fitch, (615) 532-0431:

Kevin.fitch@state.tn.us or LinnAnn Welch, (615) 532-0241: LinnAnn.Welch@state.tn.us.

Description: Montgomery Bell Natural Area is located in Dickson County and is comprised of two tracts of high quality oak-hickory forest nested within the 5,000-acre Montgomery Bell State Park. These two tracts (Wildcat Ridge and the southern tract) were recognized as significant by two prominent ecologists, Dr. Elsie Quarterman and Catherine Keever as a part of the National Natural Landmark inventories in the early 1970's. In the inventory report, they stated that these tracts "provide the best known example of representative oak-hickory forest ecosystems on the Western Highland Rim in Tennessee. The presence of southern red oak and post oak in the dominant layer, provide floristic and ecologic affinities that are missing in the upland forest recognized elsewhere in the province." The hike will be moderate (~two to three miles) and will consist of trail hiking and botanizing. Please RSVP and more information will be provided. Dress appropriately. Bring a raincoat if weather requires it. Wear sturdy boots, long pants, bring plenty of water and a lunch.

Upper Buffalo River: Canoe Float

Location: Buffalo Canoeing Campground

Date: Saturday, April 8

Time: 11:00 pm CDT

Leaders: Cynthia Rohrbach,

Sponsor: Swan Conservation Trust

Reservations required: For information call Cynthia Rohrbach at (931) 490-3929

Description: Canoe the beautiful and remote Upper Buffalo River near Hohenwald in Lewis County. Bring your own canoe, or rent one for \$12/person. Dress appropriately for paddling this 6-mile trip, bring a lunch. Directions to Buffalo Canoeing Campground at <http://www.buffalocanoeing.com/Directions.htm>

Friends of Dunbar Cave Annual Spring Fling

Location: Dunbar Cave State Natural Area

Date: Saturday April 8

Time: Starts at 7:00 am CDT

Leader: Friends of Dunbar Cave

Sponsor(s): Dunbar State Park and Friends of Dunbar Cave

Description: Programs begin at 7:00 a.m. with an early morning bird hike. Other programs scheduled for the day are: wildflower/plant identification walks, trail hikes, canoeing on Swan Lake. Contact Dunbar Cave State Park at (931) 648-5526 for details about a full day of events sponsored by the park's Friends Group. Visit www.dunbarcave.org for the complete schedule and directions to the park.

Stillhouse Hollow Falls State Natural Area – Trail Building

Location: Highway 43, just north of Summertown on west side of highway

Date: April 8

Time: 9:00 am CDT

Leader: Rick Lausten, Columbia-Franklin Chapter of the Tennessee Trails Association (TTA)

Sponsor: Columbia-Franklin TTA

Reservations required: Contact Rick Lausten at ph (615) 373-0029 or at saturncarl@aol.com.

Description: Visit one of the newest state natural areas and help build the trail to the waterfalls. Be sure to bring lunch, water, sturdy boots and gloves. All other tools will be provided. Get a chance to check out this natural area before it is even officially open!

Stones River National Battlefield: Defending Against Natural Area Invaders

Location: Meet at the Visitor's Center, 3501 Old Nashville Highway, Murfreesboro

Date: Saturday, April 8th

Time: 1:00 pm CDT

Leader: John McKay, National Park Service

Sponsor: Stones River National Battlefield

For more information: please call (615) 478-1035 or (615) 893-9501

Description: National Park Ranger John McKay will be leading a group caravan to several points on the road around this unique natural area that is contained within the National

Battlefield. Topics of discussion will be how the local geology has affected the ecosystem and the life and death battle that is going on right now between invasive exotic plants and the native plants that evolved here. Stones River National Battlefield is a National Park established to preserve and interpret the ground over which the Battle of Stones River raged between December 31, 1862 and January 2, 1863. This battle resulted in the Unions control of an important supply network that ultimately began the Unions "March to the Sea."

Stones River supports a high quality cedar glade and barrens complex that includes several federally listed endangered species and state listed rare species that are protected under public ownership.

Canoe Float on the Duck River State Scenic River adjacent to the Duck River Complex Natural Area

Location: Meet at the river fountain at the Bicentennial Mall downtown Nashville. Transportation for a limited number will be provided by reservation. Cost is \$20 per canoe or \$10 per individual.

Date: Saturday April 8

Time: 9:00 am CDT to approximately 5:00 pm CDT

Leader: Forrest Evans, Stewardship Ecologist, Natural Areas Program

Sponsors: The Tennessee Chapter of The Nature Conservancy and the Division of Natural Heritage

Reservations required: Please call (615) 532-0431 or email forrest.evans@state.tn.us

Description: This is an easy four-hour float down Tennessee's newest scenic river. This is a wide gentle river with no whitewater. We will be observing the river life and the surrounding bluffs, glades, and open areas along the river. Call for details!

Wildflower Hike at Taylor Hollow State Natural Area

Location: Meet at the home of Dr. Ward on Phillips Hollow Road in northeast Sumner County, call for detailed directions.

Date: Saturday April 8

Time: 10:00 am CDT.

Leader: Roger McCoy, Administrator, Natural Heritage Inventory Program

Sponsor: Division of Natural Heritage

Reservations requested: please call (615) 532-0431 or email forrest.evans@state.tn.us

Description: Join Tennessee's Natural Heritage Coordinator Roger McCoy on an outstanding wildflower hike to Taylor Hollow, a Tennessee Chapter of The Nature Conservancy owned state natural area. Taylor Hollow is renowned for its spring flora, especially the display that the blue-eyed Mary often provides. This is a moderately difficult hike. Participants should bring water, sturdy footwear, and dress appropriately for the weather.

Short Springs State Natural Area: Spring Wildflower Walks

Location: Short Springs parking area (under the water tower) on Short Springs Rd. just outside of Tullahoma

Date: Sunday April 9th

Time: 10:00 am and again at 2:00 pm CDT

Leader: Dennis Horn, Friends of Short Springs

Sponsor: Friends of Short Springs

Reservations requested: Please call (931) 461-0262

Description: Short Springs is perhaps one of the richest wildflower areas in Middle Tennessee. Come enjoy the wildflowers, waterfalls, and cascading streams on a short three to four-mile hike, and gain a greater appreciation of this wonderful Middle Tennessee jewel.

Savage Gulf Natural Area - Collins West Trail: Wildflower Hike to Horsepound Falls.

Location: Meet at the Target store parking lot off Bell Road near Hickory Hollow, transportation for a limited number will be provided by reservation or meet at the Collins West trail head at 10:00 am CDT

Date: Sunday, April 9th

Time: 8:00 am CDT return to Nashville around 4:00 pm

Leader: Mary Priestley, Curator, Sewanee Herbarium, The University of the South

Sponsor: Friends of South Cumberland State Recreation Area

Reservations required: RSVP by April 7th to Forrest Evans (615)-532-0431 or forrest.evans@state.tn.us The first 10 reservations can take advantage of van transportation from Nashville provided by the Tennessee Natural Areas Program, or you may show up at the Collins West Trail head at 10:00 am.

Description: Follow Mary Priestley as she observes the wildflowers on a walk through the springtime beauty of one of Tennessee's best-loved natural areas, the Savage Gulf State Natural Area. The Collins West trail at Savage Gulf Natural Area has one of the Cumberland Plateau's most bountiful displays of spring wildflowers and offers great views and natural beauty. The trail is about five miles long. There is one creek crossing (no bridge), and the trail descends 600 feet and continues to Horsepound Falls. You will return the same way climbing out of the gorge, which makes this hike rated moderately difficult. Dress for the weather. You might want to bring a raincoat in the event of rain, wear sturdy boots, and bring plenty of water and your lunch.

Savage Gulf, Natural Bridge, Buggytop Cave, Fiery Gizzard: Celebrate Natural Areas Week

Location: South Cumberland State Park

Date: Monday April 3rd through Sunday April 9th.

Time: There will be various programs through the week. For specific times of events, please contact South Cumberland State Park (931) 924-2980

Sponsor: South Cumberland State Park

No reservations required: if you require more information about events, please call (931) 924-2980

Description: Join us for a variety of programs to highlight Tennessee State Natural Areas. The South Cumberland State Park staff will host events with wildflower walks, live wildlife demonstrations, hikes and many different programs. All are welcome.

Radnor Lake State Natural Area: Celebrate Natural Areas Week

Location: Radnor Lake State Natural Area

Date: Monday April 3rd through Sunday April 9th.

Time: There will be various programs throughout the week. For specific times of events, please contact Radnor Lake State Natural Area (615) 373-3467

Sponsor: Radnor Lake State Natural Area

No reservations required: if you require more information about events, please call (615) 373-3467

Description: Join us for a variety of programs to highlight Tennessee State Natural Areas. Friends of Radnor Lake will host events with wildflower walks, live wildlife demonstrations, art show. All are welcome.

Burgess Falls State Natural Area: Hike to Burgess Falls

Location: Meet at Burgess Falls State Natural Area south of Cookeville.

Date 1: Sunday April 2 at 1:00 pm CDT, Wednesday, April 5 at 10:00 am CDT,
Saturday April 8 at 11:00 am CDT

Leader: Park Staff

Sponsor: Burgess Falls State Natural Area

No reservations required: for more information call (931) 432-5312

Description: Join a park ranger at the main trailhead for a guided three-mile round-trip hike to three magnificent waterfalls. You will then hike to the base of the main 136-foot waterfall. Burgess Falls provides both wonderful spring wildflowers and three scenic waterfalls for your enjoyment. Wear sturdy boots, bring water and a camera.

Burgess Falls State Natural Area: Landscaping with Native Tennessee Plant Workshops

Location: Meet at Burgess Falls State Natural Area south of Cookeville.

Date 1: Sunday April 2 at 3:00 pm CDT, Saturday, April 8 at 1:00 pm CDT

Sponsor: Burgess Falls State Natural Area

Description: Join the Park Ranger at the 20,000 square foot Butterfly Garden for a workshop on native plant landscaping. We will look at different species of plants and then jump right in and demonstrate while we all plant. Bring gloves and water.

No reservations required: for more information call (931) 432-5312

EAST TENNESSEE ACTIVITIES

Geology Field Trip to Ozone Falls and Piney Falls State Natural Areas

Location: Meet at Ozone Falls parking area

Date: April 5

Time: 8:00 am EDT

Leader: Martin Kohl, Geologist, Division of Geology, and Lisa Huff, Stewardship Ecologist, Natural Areas Program

Sponsors: Division of Geology and Division of Natural Heritage

Reservations required: Contact Lisa Huff at (865) 594-5601 or lisa.huff@state.tn.us and include your contact information if you leave a message.

Description: Two hikes for the price of one! We will begin our geology field trip at Ozone Falls. After concluding our program there, we will travel to Piney Falls to explore the geology of its features. We will discover the hidden secrets of both waterfalls and learn the geologic history of these phenomenal Plateau features. We'll put to rest rumors of petrified wood at Piney Falls! Neither hike is difficult, but the climb up from the bottom of Ozone Falls is steep and rocky. The program should last until mid-afternoon. We will make the hike unless it is forecast to be extremely rainy or inclement. If cancelled, we will try to reschedule, which is why we need reservations and contact information from interested participants. The weather may be cool, especially underneath the waterfalls, so dress warmly and wear good shoes. Bring lunch and water. For directions and descriptions of these natural areas go to www.tdec.net/nh/natareas/ and select the natural area of interest from the drop-down box on the left of the screen.

Hike to Northrup Falls at Colditz Cove State Natural Area

Location: Colditz Cove State Natural Area

Date: April 6, 2006

Time: 1:00 pm EDT

Leader: Park Ranger Brandon Taylor

Sponsor: Pickett State Park

No reservations required: meet at the trailhead at Colditz Cove at 1:00 pm C.S.T.

Description: The trail is moderately difficult so wear sturdy boots. The hike will last about 1.5 hours. Participants will want to bring water and a camera.

Hike to DeBord Falls at Frozen Head

Location: We will meet at the Frozen Head Visitor Center and car pool the one mile to the Panther Branch trailhead.

Date: Saturday, April 1, 2006

Time: 9:00 am. EDT

Leader: Michael Hodge, Park Ranger

Sponsor: Frozen Head State Park and Natural Area

Reservations: Reservations are recommended but are not required. Contact Frozen Head at (423) 346-3318 for more information.

Description: Get outside and celebrate Natural Areas Week with this easy one-mile round trip hike along the Panther Branch Trail. We will see and discuss wildflowers, songbirds, and anything else that catches our attention. Please bring water and snacks, wear sturdy walking shoes or boots, and a rain jacket may come in handy. Binoculars are recommended.

Frozen Head Morning Bird Walk

Location: We will meet at the Frozen Head Visitor Center.

Date: Thursday, April 6, 2006

Time: 9:00 am EDT

Leader: Michael Hodge, Park Ranger

Sponsor: Frozen Head State Park and Natural Area

No reservations required: contact Frozen Head at (423) 346-3318 for more information or visit www.tdec.net/nh/natareas/frozen/

Description: This easy hike is a one mile round trip along the Panther Branch Trail. We will see and discuss the diversity and identification of migrant songbirds. Please bring water and snacks, wear sturdy walking shoes or boots, and a rain jacket may come in handy. Binoculars are recommended.

Virgin Falls State Natural Area Guided Nature Hike

Location: Meet at the Food Lion off Bell Road south of I-40. Take exit-219 off I-40 and turn south onto Stewarts Ferry Pike (Stewarts Ferry Turns into Bell Road) Food Lion will be on your right, on Bell Road or meet at Virgin Falls. It is located southeast of Sparta. The natural area and pocket wilderness is accessed via Highway 70. In the community of DeRossett, eleven miles east of Sparta, turn onto Eastland Road (Mourberry Road) and proceed six miles to Scott Gulf Road. Turn onto Scott Gulf Road and proceed two miles to the parking area on the right side of the road. (See www.tdec.net/nh/natareas/virgin/ for more information).

Date: Saturday, April 8

Time: 7:00 am EDT (at Food Lion) (8:30-9:00 on site)

Leaders: Kevin Fitch, Science Director – Natural Areas Program

Sponsor: Division of Natural Heritage

Reservations required: RSVP by 6 April to Kevin Fitch (615) 532-0431 or Kevin.fitch@state.tn.us. The first ten reservations can take advantage of free van transportation provided by the Tennessee Natural Areas Program.

Description: Virgin Falls Pocket Wilderness is 317-acre natural area located in White County. It is owned and managed by Bowater Incorporated. The natural area is named for Virgin Falls, which is formed by an underground stream that emerges from a cave that then drops over a 110 feet high cliff before disappearing into another cave at the bottom of the sink. The area is noted for its unique geologic features including several other waterfalls that include Big Laurel, Sheep Cave Falls, and Big Branch Falls. Caves at Virgin Falls include Big Laurel, Sheep Cave, and Virgin Falls Cave. Sinks here include the Virgin Falls Sink and Sheep Cave Sink. Sinkholes are characteristic karst features found on the Cumberland Plateau escarpment. Hike: The hike will be strenuous and will be eight miles round trip. See <http://www.cs.utk.edu/~dunigan/pockets/vf.html> for more details. Dress appropriately and bring a raincoat if there is a chance of rain. Wear sturdy boots, long pants, bring plenty of water and lunch.

Stinging Fork State Natural Area Guided Nature Hike

Location: Meet at the Food Lion off Bell Road south of I-40. Take exit-219 off I-40 and turn south onto Stewarts Ferry Pike (Stewarts Ferry Turns into Bell Road) Food Lion will be on your right, on Bell Road or meet at Stinging Fork Falls. It is located west of Spring City. Access to the natural area is via Highway 68. In Spring City turn onto Shut-In Gap Road and proceed 5 miles to the parking area, which is on the right. (See www.tdec.net/nh/natareas/stinging/ for more information).

Date: Sunday, April 9

Time: 7:00 am EDT (At Food Lion), (8:30-9:30 on site)

Leaders: Kevin Fitch, Science Director – Natural Areas Program

Sponsor: Division of Natural Heritage

Reservations required: RSVP by 6 April to Kevin Fitch (615) 532-0431 or Kevin.fitch@state.tn.us. The first 10 reservations can take advantage of free van transportation provided by the Tennessee Natural Areas Program.

Description: Stinging Fork Falls Pocket Wilderness is a 104-acre natural area located in Rhea County. It is owned and managed by Bowater Incorporated. It is named after the 30 ft. waterfall located within the Stinging Fork gorge. The creek waters slide over the fan shaped falls, then quickly slip through chutes, and tumble over cascades below the falls. The gorge contains a 60-year old second growth mixed mesophytic forest community. Steep cliffs may be found along the smaller bluffs that descend into the gorge. An oak-pine forest can be found along the gorge bluff. Indian Head Point provides a view of the gorge and creek 160 feet below. Much of the upland in the area surrounding the access trail is planted loblolly pine. The access trail is outside of the natural area. A future segment of the Cumberland Trail is planned to cross Stinging Fork. Hike: The hike will be moderate and will be three miles round trip. See <http://www.cs.utk.edu/~dunigan/pockets/sf.html> for more details. Dress appropriately and expect rain, wear sturdy boots and long pants, and bring plenty of water and lunch.

Frozen Head Wildflower Pilgrimage Hikes

Location: We will meet at the Frozen Head Visitor Center.

Date: Saturday, April 8, 2006

Time: 10:00 am and 2:00 pm EDT

Leader: To Be Announced

Sponsor(s):

Description: This hike is part of the 38th Annual Wildflower Pilgrimage and will explore the amazing botanical diversity of Frozen Head. Please bring water and snacks, and wear sturdy walking shoes or boots.

No reservations required: contact Frozen Head at (423) 346-3318 for more information or visit www.tdec.net/nh/natareas/frozen/.

Hike to the Famous Twin Arches State Natural Area in the Big South Fork

Location: Meet at Twin Arches Trailhead parking lot.

Date: Saturday, April 8, 2006

Time: 10:00 am EDT

Leader: Howard Duncan

Sponsor: Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area

No reservations required: For more information, or driving directions to the Twin Arches Trailhead, please call the Bandy Creek Visitor Center between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm at (423) 286-7275.

Description: Join National Park Service Ranger Howard Duncan for a hike to the Twin Arches. The group will talk about geology, history, plant life and more during the 0.7-mile hike to the base of the Twin Arches. While the hike involves several sets of stairs, the group will stop often along the trail. The total round trip hike is 1.4 miles and will last approximately 1 hour.

Please remember to wear comfortable walking shoes and to bring plenty of water and snacks or a lunch.

Spring Ecology Hike at House Mountain

Location: Meet at House Mountain parking area

Date: Sunday, April 2, 2006

Time: 1:00 pm EDT

Leader: Lisa Huff, Stewardship Ecologist, Natural Areas Program

Sponsor: Division of Natural Heritage

Reservations required:

Description: We'll enjoy a warm (hopefully) spring afternoon on House Mountain going up the West Overlook Trail, down the Crest Trail to the East End Overlook and back down to the parking area via the Mountain Trail. The trip will take approximately 4 hours. The climb is strenuous, but we'll rest often to accommodate less serious hikers. The rest of the trip is moderate after reaching the top of the mountain. We should see some nice, common, spring wildflowers and maybe some migrating spring birds, so bring binoculars if you like. Bring water, layered clothing, good footwear, and snacks as necessary. For more information, contact Lisa Huff, (865) 594-5601 or visit www.tdec.net/nh/natareas/housemtn/

Black Oak Ridge Proposed State Conservation Area Interpretive Walk

Location: Meet in the parking area at the west guardhouse on the Oak Ridge Turnpike just east of Wisconsin Ave. in Oak Ridge.

Date: Sunday April 2, 2006

Time: 1:30 pm EDT till about 4:30 pm EDT

Leader: Dr. Larry Pounds, Plant Ecologist

Sponsor: Tennessee Citizen Wilderness Planning

No reservations required: For more information please call Larry at (865) 483-8635

Description: We will carpool from the guardhouse to the Poplar Creek Water Gap. We will walk from there into the proposed conservation area. We will walk about one mile round trip on a gravel road with an optional short off trail trip. We will see spring wildflowers and views of the water gap. Bring water to drink and wear good shoes.

Relaxation Hike at Colditz Cove State Natural Area

Location: Meet at the Colditz Cove parking area.

Date: April 8, 2006

Time: 9:00 am EDT

Leader: Lisa Huff, Stewardship Ecologist, Natural Areas Program

Sponsor: Division of Natural Heritage

Reservations: Reservations not required.

Description: This hike is rated easy to moderate and is a favorite senior citizen hike! Come to beautiful Colditz Cove State Natural Area and join us for a spring hike into one of Tennessee's most lovely waterfalls – Northrup Falls. The new entry trail will take us past carpets of spring wildflowers to a spectacular overlook above the falls. Then, we will drop down into the gorge on the loop trail and pass underneath the waterfall on our way back. There is one area where you'll have to climb through some large boulders. You'll get to see some huge old growth white pine and hemlock trees on this hike. Wear good shoes and bring water. It is cool underneath the waterfall and in the hemlock forest. For more information, call Lisa Huff at (865) 594-5601 or visit www.tdec.net/nh/natareas/colditz/.

Spring Hike to Honey Creek State Natural Area in the Big South Fork

Location: Meet at the Honey Creek Overlook parking area (directions below).

Date: April 8, 2006

Time: 9:00 am EDT

Leader: Alan Wasik and Steve Pardue, Tennessee State Parks

Sponsor: Pickett CCC Memorial State Park, (931) 879-5821

Reservations required: Contact Alan Wasik to register for the hike at the number above or at Alan.Wasik@state.tn.us

Description: Honey Creek is one of the most picturesque areas of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation area and it is also a Tennessee State Natural Area! The hike is less than 6 miles long, but is rated moderate to difficult. It includes some trekking through Honey Creek itself, so make sure you bring waterproof footwear or an extra pair of dry socks. You'll get to see wonderful rock formations, walk through a crack in huge boulders the size of houses, and see the Big South Fork up close and from the spectacular overlook. Spring wildflowers are abundant. Dress in layers and prepared for damp weather, bring water and food. For more information, call Pickett State Park or visit www.tdec.net/nh/natareas/colditz/.

Directions: On State Highway 52 going east out of Allardt, TN, take Mt. Helen Road on the left (this will be a right if you're traveling west on Hwy. 52 out of Rugby, TN). Go down Mt. Helen Road. It will fork. Take the left fork bearing toward Zenith. When you see signs for Zenith, continue straight, heading northeast. The turnoff to the Honey Creek Overlook and trailhead parking will be on your left. There is a good map located on the web at: <http://www.nps.gov/biso/home.htm>. From that page, select the link on the left under "Recreation Opportunities" for "hiking trails" and then scroll down the resulting list until you find the link for Honey Creek Loop.

River Bluff TVA Small Wild Area Annual Wildflower Walk

Location: River Bluff TVA Small Wild Area on the Norris Dam Reservation. To reach the River Bluff TVA Small Wild Area, take the Lake City exit (#128) off I-75 north of Knoxville. Follow U.S. Hwy. 441 past the Norris Dam State Park entrance on the left and continue approximately ¾ mile to Dabney Road on the right. Turn onto Dabney road, bear to the left, and the Small Wild Area trailhead parking area is located approximately ¾ mile from U.S. 441.

Date: Saturday, April 1, 2006

Time: 10:00 am EST and 1:00 pm EST

Leaders: Biologists and volunteers from TVA, Ijam's Nature Center, Norris Dam State Park and the Friends of Norris Dam State Park

Sponsors: TVA, Ijam's Nature Center, Norris Dam State Park and the Friends of Norris Dam State Park. For additional information about this hike and other TVA hikes contact Jason Mitchell, TVA Heritage Resources at (865) 632-6414.

No reservations required

Description: The trail is a moderately difficult, 3.2-mile loop, and is known for a spectacular array of spring wildflowers, especially yellow trout lilies, celandine poppies, bloodroot, spring beauties and toothwort. The hikes will be held rain or shine, and participants are encouraged to wear comfortable shoes and appropriate clothing for the weather.

Fall Creek Falls State Park and Natural Area: 25th Annual Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage

Location: Most of the events start at the Inn Lobby or at the Nature Center at the Park

Dates: TBA

Time: TBA

Leaders: Stuart Carroll, Fall Creek Falls State Park and Natural Area

Sponsor: Fall Creek Falls State Park and Natural Area

Reservations requested: Please call (423) 881-5708 for more information

Description: The spring wildflower pilgrimage includes three days of hikes, boat rides and presentations. Not only will the activities focus on the local plants, but also the local animals and the night sky above the Park. Call the park's nature center for details and visit www.tdec.net/nh/natareas/fallcreek/

Early Season Bird Walk to Celebrate Tennessee State Natural Areas Week and Hampton Creek Cove's designation as an Important Bird Area (IBA)

Location: Meet at Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area Parking Lot

Date: Saturday, April 8, 2006

Time: 9:00 am EDT

Leader: Nora Schubert

Sponsor: Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, contact Judy Murray at (423) 323-4993

Description: Nominated by the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy's (SAHC) 2005 Seasonal Ecologist Nora Schubert, Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area (HCCSNA) was designated by Audubon as an Important Bird Area (IBA) on December 31, 2005.

Audubon, as the Partner for [Bird Life International](http://www.birdlife.org/), is working to identify a network of sites that provide critical habitat for birds. This effort known as the Important Bird Areas Program (IBA) recognizes that habitat loss and fragmentation are the most serious threats facing populations of birds across America and around the world. Unless the rapid destruction and degradation of habitat can be slowed, populations of many birds may decline to dangerously low levels. The IBA Program helps birds by setting science-based priorities for habitat conservation and

promoting positive action to safeguard vital bird habitats.

Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area, a 700-acre component of the Highlands of Roan conservation initiative, is located in Carter County, TN, on the flanks of Little Hump Mountain. A caretaker operates a small Appalachian farm at the lower elevations. The site, bisected by the Left Prong of Hampton Creek, contains a diverse array of habitats including mature hardwood forests, pasturelands and hay fields with a significant amount of early- and mid-succession scrub-shrubs habitat on the peripheries of the fields.

The large mosaic of vegetative communities found at Hampton Creek Cove supports at least 89 species of birds, of which 71 species breed or are potential breeders. Of these, 44 are neotropical species. Others migrate through the area or overwinter on the property. At the lower elevations, early secondary succession habitat provides excellent nesting habitat for the golden-winged warbler, a Tennessee "In Need of Management" species. This particular habitat type also supports many other species that require early succession habitat for nesting such as the alder flycatcher and willow flycatcher and more common species. This habitat is decreasing in the Southern Appalachians due to reforestation and human gentrification and is considered rare at high elevations in the Southern Blue Ridge. Managing Hampton Creek Cove's early succession habitat and encouraging the creation of early succession habitat on surrounding private land may prove vital to the continued existence of the golden-winged warbler in this region.

The walk will traverse early succession as well as mature forest habitat in quest of early spring birds. The hiking is easy, but be prepared for any weather conditions. Snow can still linger in the woods in early April, so wear boots. Bring water, a lunch – and binoculars if you have them. The hike will end in early afternoon.

Directions: From Elizabethton, TN, take U.S. Highway 19E to the town of Roan Mountain. In the town of Roan Mountain, take State Route 143 south, then turn left onto Stratton Street into the town. Turn right at the first stop sign, then bear left on West Street. Turn right onto Old Highway 143, then turn left on the bridge that crosses the creek, just across from the ball field and before passing the Cloudland Elementary School. Stay straight on this road, following Hampton Creek up through the cove. The Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area parking area is on the left, just past Grays Chapel.